General Assembly

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Agenda item 67 (*b*)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/61/443/Add.2 and Corr.1)*]

61/172. Hostage-taking

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations,

Recalling the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[1] which guarantees, inter alia, the right to life, liberty and security of person, freedom from torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, freedom of movement and protection from arbitrary detention,

Recalling also the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, adopted on 25 June 1993 by the World Conference on Human Rights,[2]

Taking into account the International Convention against the Taking of Hostages, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 34/146 of 17 December 1979, which recognizes that everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person and considers the taking of hostages to be an offence of grave concern to the international community, as well as the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Internationally Protected Persons, including Diplomatic Agents, adopted by the Assembly in its resolution 3166 (XXVIII) of 14 December 1973,

Bearing in mind the relevant Security Council resolutions condemning all cases of terrorism, including those of hostage-taking, in particular resolution 1440 (2002) of 24 October 2002,

Mindful of the fact that hostage-taking constitutes a war crime under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court[3] and is also a grave breach of the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 for the protection of victims of war,[4]

Reaffirming its relevant resolutions, including the most recent, resolution 57/220 of 18 December 2002,

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[1] Resolution 217 A (III).

[2] A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.

[3] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2187, No. 38544.

[4] Ibid., vol. 75, Nos. 970–973.

Recalling all relevant resolutions of the Commission on Human Rights on the subject, including its most recent, resolution 2005/31 of 19 April 2005,[5] in which it condemned the taking of any person as a hostage, as well as the statement by the President of the Human Rights Council of 30 June 2006 on the same subject,[6]

Concerned that, despite the efforts of the international community, acts of hostage-taking in different forms and manifestations, including, inter alia, those committed by terrorists and armed groups, continue to take place and have even increased in many regions of the world,

Appealing for the humanitarian action of humanitarian organizations, in particular the International Committee of the Red Cross and its delegates, to be respected, in accordance with the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and the Additional Protocols thereto of 1977,[7]

Recognizing that hostage-taking calls for resolute, firm and concerted efforts on the part of the international community in order, in strict conformity with international human rights standards, to bring such abhorrent practices to an end,

1. *Reaffirms* that hostage-taking, wherever and by whomever committed, is a serious crime aimed at the destruction of human rights and is, under any circumstances, unjustifiable;

2. *Condemns* all acts of hostage-taking, anywhere in the world;

3. *Demands* that all hostages be released immediately and without any preconditions, and expresses its solidarity with the victims of hostage-taking;

4. *Calls upon* States to take all necessary measures, in accordance with relevant provisions of international humanitarian law and international human rights standards, to prevent, combat and punish acts of hostage-taking, including by strengthening international cooperation in this field;

5. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.

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19 December 2006

[5] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2005, Supplement No. 3* and corrigendum (E/2005/23 and Corr.1), chap. II, sect. A.

[6] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-first Session, Supplement No. 53* (A/61/53), part one, chap. II, sect. C.

[7] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1125, Nos. 17512 and 17513.